



To: Mayor & Council
Bc 11.03.10

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Tomzak and Members of City Council
FROM: Beverly R. Cameron, City Manager
DATE: November 2, 2010
SUBJECT: City Manager's Update

Highlights of major activities and other notable developments:

Minding the Store – The Police Department's community police officers (CPOs) hosted a training course on October 27 called "Minding the Store", designed to inform and educate the downtown retail merchants about the concerns related to retail fraud and theft. Open to owners and employees of businesses in the downtown district and led by CPO Ron Swaney, the two-hour comprehensive class focused on the prevention of credit card fraud, the detection of counterfeit traveler's checks and currency, and tips on combating shoplifting. The CPOs also offered recommendations on what actions should be taken when retail staff is confronted with a robbery attempt.

Fredericksburg First Night 2011 - Planning for this year's Fredericksburg First Night celebration is underway. Performers representing a broad spectrum of talent from across the region are scheduled from 7:00 pm to midnight at more than ten performance locations. Activities are planned for all ages and include a special Teen Scene. Colorful flashing admission buttons are tentatively scheduled to be available for sale beginning the second week in December. Staff is busy raising funds for a midnight fireworks display and selecting a safe and effective launching point.

Recreation Commission Volunteer Banquet - The 24th Annual Recreation Commission Volunteer Banquet will be held on November 18 at the Fredericksburg Hospitality House. Two hundred and sixty-seven individual volunteers, businesses, and agency representatives qualified for the banquet and will be recognized for their essential contributions to the mission of the department.

City-Wide Fiber Network Update - The Information Technology Department has successfully connected and is actively using fiber at the following locations: City Hall, the Police Department, Transit, Fire Station 1, Circuit Court, General District Court, Executive Plaza, the Visitor's Center, the School Board Office, Hugh Mercer Elementary School, and James Monroe High School. IT has begun disconnecting third party data circuits. Remaining locations to be moved to the City's fiber network are Dorothy Hart Community Center, Original Walker Grant School, and the Library. Fiber installation for these locations is anticipated to be completed in the next few weeks.

Building and Development Services Updates – With the absence in recent months of two building inspectors due to injuries, the workload at B&DS has increased and has required internal changes to the deployment of personnel, including the hiring of a new part-time inspector. A total of 220 building permits were issued during the month of August. This increase is primarily attributable to the residential construction of the Haven, a new multi-family apartment complex in Celebrate Virginia South.

B&DS issued Certificate of Occupancies for the following:

2547 Cowan Boulevard – Women's Health and Surgery, a 3600 SF Medical Office

1451 Hospital Drive – Pratt Medical, a 15,070 SF Medical Office

1125 Jefferson Davis Highway – University Foundation Office, 2954 SF

Residential Occupancies issued for 10 homes at Village of Idlewild, one home in Kensington Hills, three homes in Riverwalk and two homes at 425 and 427 Palmer Street.

On October 3-6, Steve Smallwood attended the Joint Conference of the Virginia Building Code Official Association and Virginia Plumbing Mechanical Inspector Association in Virginia Beach.

Leaf Collection Program Begins - The Public Works Department will begin the annual leaf collection program on Monday, November 1. Residents may rake loose leaves to the curb or shoulder of the street to be collected by PW personnel. Leaves that have been bagged will also be collected. Public Works will complete two "passes" through the City during the program. The goal is to complete the program in two months, but a number of factors, primarily inclement weather, can have a significant impact on the schedule. Weekly schedules will be posted in the newspaper, on Channel 24, and on the City's website.

Sending a truck and crew to collect leaves outside of the scheduled order causes delays and reduces the efficiency of the program. For this reason, residents are asked to refrain from requesting that unbagged leaves be collected prior to the scheduled collection period. Residents may request the collection of bagged leaves at any time by calling the Public Works office at 372-1023.

Fire Department Golf Tournament - On Monday September 20, the Fire Department sponsored its 16th Annual Golf Tournament at Meadows Farms Golf Course. This year's benefactor was the Rappahannock Council on Domestic Violence "Children's Division". Through the participation and generosity of the various sponsors, the department was able to contribute \$7,000 to this worthy cause. Over the past sixteen years, the Fire Department has been actively involved in this community service project as another opportunity to give to the community. Several charitable organizations have been the recipients of these proceeds, including the Rappahannock United Way, Cans for Burned Children, and the UVA Hospital Burn Center.

Mayfield Civic Association Safety Awareness - On Saturday October 30, the Chief, Deputy Chief, and the on-duty shift from the Fire Department, along with the Police

Department's community police officers, assisted Mr. Shawn Lawrence, Councilor Bea Paolucci, and members of the Mayfield Civic Association with their safety awareness campaign. The participants canvassed door to door in the Mayfield community delivering information on emergency preparedness, smoke detectors, and the Fredericksburg Alert system to the neighborhood residents. One resident was found to be in need of a smoke detector, and later that day a Fire Department engine crew delivered and installed the safety device.

FRED Transit's State Triennial Review - The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to ensure that recipients of Section 5311 funds and other FTA assistance comply with federal requirements. To meet this federal mandate, DRPT conducts periodic reviews of its Section 5311 grantees. Additional objectives of the reviews are to ensure compliance with State requirements, encourage progress, and identify training and technical assistance needs. On October 6 and 7, DRPT conducted an on-site FTA 5311 Triennial Review of FREDericksburg Regional Transit's service and program for Caroline and King George Counties. DRPT found FRED's Caroline and King George Transit Program to be in compliance with FTA 5311 program requirements.

Recycling Containers - Public Works has placed four recycling containers on Caroline Street in the downtown area for the use of visitors, shoppers and employees of businesses. Plastic and glass bottles, aluminum cans, and newspapers may be placed in the containers. Public Works will be monitoring the use of the containers for volume and for contamination of the contents with non-recyclable materials. If a determination is made that a container is not performing its function at its current location, it will be moved to a different location. Public Works has two more containers and will place them in appropriate locations such as Hurkamp Park and the train station in the near future.

These containers were obtained "used" for a fraction of the cost of a new container of similar quality. Public Works personnel lettered the lids and otherwise made the containers presentable for placement, thus recycling the recycling containers!

"Focus on Fredericksburg" Seeks to Build Meetings Sales from Local Organizers - The Economic Development and Tourism Department held its second "Focus on Fredericksburg" event on October 28 at the University of Mary Washington's Jepson Alumni Executive Center. The purpose of these events is to educate local planners on the services provided by the department, as well as highlight traditional and non-traditional venues. Making city employees aware of this event is a priority, as leads from other departments, including Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Fredericksburg Regional Transit, and Social Services have translated into business for the city. Anyone interested in attending future "Focus on Fredericksburg" events should contact Victoria Matthews at vamatthews@fredericksburgva.gov or 540-372-1216.

On the Road Again - The fall season is a busy travel time for the Economic Development and Tourism Office. Staff has marketed the Fredericksburg region at the following tradeshow: Affordable Meetings in Washington, D.C., the Pentagon Travel Show, Starr

Tours in Trenton, New Jersey, Military Reunion shows in Fairfax and Niagara Falls, New York, Rejuvenate Marketplace (religious meetings) in Louisville, Kentucky, and Virginia Society of Association Executives in Richmond. EDT also staffed a booth at the Marine Corps Marathon Health and Fitness Expo in D.C., promoting Fredericksburg's Historic Half Marathon.

Fredericksburg Serves As Example for Museum Partnerships - Successful partnerships between tourism direct marketing organizations and the museums they represent was a topic at the state's tourism conference in October. Julie Perry, Manager of Visitor Services from the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, was selected to give a presentation and serve on a discussion panel at the VA-1, co-hosted by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Virginia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, and the Virginia Hospitality and Tourism Association. The City of Fredericksburg is a model for cooperative marketing efforts in other regions of the state.

Economic Development and Tourism Launches E-Newsletter - An electronic newsletter will be launched November 15 by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Each issue will contain a roundup of economic development and tourism news, EDA news, updates on city initiatives, resources and incentive programs, news from the University of Mary Washington, Mary Washington Healthcare and the Fredericksburg Regional Alliance, new business openings, leases and licenses, building permit summaries, site plan approvals, upcoming events, tourism statistics and more. A city business, Spangler-Erkert & Associates, is designing and assembling the newsletter in conjunction with EDT. The newsletter will be distributed by email to the City's business community, elected and appointed officials, community leaders, the commercial real estate community and interested citizens. Anyone will be able to download or subscribe to the newsletter on-line.

Fiscal Affairs Audit Report - The audit firm of Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates completed the field work related to the FY2010 audit on September 17, 2010. As a part of the normal process of the audit activities, the Fiscal Affairs Department has been working with the auditors related to the completion of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2010. As in prior years, Fiscal Affairs plans to distribute a completed FY2010 CAFR at the Council meeting scheduled for December 14. Representatives from Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates will be present at the January 11 Council meeting to review their findings and to discuss any concerns that may be identified by the auditors or by members of Council.

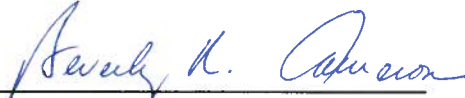
Police Department Conducts Voluntary Fitness Program - A total of twenty-five employees recently volunteered to participate in the LawFit assessment program, designed to measure physical performance that relates to the job requirements of law enforcement professionals. After undergoing a medical screening, the participants competed in trials that included a 1.5 mile run, bench press, sit-ups, pull-ups or lat pull-downs, and a flexibility test. The final event was an agility test that includes obstacles an officer might encounter while chasing a suspect on foot. Each competitor's overall score was factored according to the participant's age, weight, and gender, and ten employees

concluded the tests with total scores that entitled them to Gold, Silver, or Bronze level achievement recognition. The LawFit program is intended to encourage Police Department employees to maintain an above average level of physical fitness, thus improving the ability to perform their essential tasks and reducing the likelihood of job-related injury. Another voluntary assessment will be held in the spring of 2011.

City Receives Forfeiture - In April 2007, in accordance with State law, the City Treasurer started proceedings to sell a property located at 707 Amelia Street for non-payment of back taxes. Once sold, the City received the requisite proceeds to account for the taxes owed and the cost of processing the sale. The original delinquent property owner is entitled to any balance of proceeds, after the tax obligations, cost of sale, and any other obligations are liquidated. However, on rare occasions such as this one, the property owner does not respond to notice and does not collect the proceeds. The Code of Virginia, §58.1-3967, specifies that if two years pass and the property owner of record does not collect the proceeds, then the Clerk of the Circuit Court forwards the proceeds from the property sale to the locality where the taxes were owed.

At this point, the City Council may, if the prior owner comes forward and shows prior entitlement, provide payment in such amount as it sees fit. Council would need to pass an ordinance to provide this relief, and this is discretionary under the statute. In this event, with no owner coming forward, staff recommends the City should use these forfeiture funds for public purposes.

The amount of forfeited proceeds is \$173,812.11. Staff suggests treating these funds as unanticipated one-time revenue, and receiving them in the City's Public Works Capital Fund to offset the proposed borrowing of funds to purchase fleet replacements for the Public Works Department (budgeted for \$300,000 in FY 2011).


Beverly R. Cameron